

Curriculum References

PSHE, Key Stage 4.

- 1a. Pupils should be taught to be aware of their personal qualities, skills, achievements and potential, so that they can set personal goals.
- 2c. Pupils should be taught to identify strategies for prevention and management of stress.
- 2h. Pupils should be taught to recognise and follow health and safety requirements.

Road Safety Messages

The dangers of stress and driving.

Aim(s) of Lesson

To consider the effects stress has on driving and safety. To consider some ways to manage stress. To reflect on how well pupils are developing such strategies.

What you will need

Discussion sheet: *Incident scenarios*.

Activity sheet: *Incident reaction grid*.

Activities

- Ask the the class to think about films or computer games that depict car chases as part of the action e.g. films like *Bullet* or *Ronin*, or games like *Gran Turismo* (playstation game). Ask the class to think about how watching or playing these makes people feel, e.g. tense, excited, stressed, etc. They could do this as a small group task and feed-back to the whole group. Point out that when adrenalin and the body's fear, fight or flight responses take over, that judgement and restraint can be overlooked. This obviously affects driving. Ask whether there are situations when high speed driving on public roads is justified. If so how can the dangers be minimised?
- Ask the class to think about how drivers they know react to stressful situations, e.g. getting stuck behind a slow, wide lorry which you can't overtake when you are already late. Do they keep calm and drive safely? Or do they get stressed and take risks like overtaking when it's not safe? Do they lose their temper?
- Allocate pupils to work in small groups or pairs and distribute the discussion sheet *Incident Scenarios*. Pupils are to read the scenarios and discuss them. What is stressful about them? How might different drivers react?
- Distribute the activity sheet *Incident Reaction Grid*. Pupils should focus on one scenario at a time and consider the possible responses of poor drivers and of better drivers. They should record their ideas in the grid. Ask them to consider the factors that could help drivers to respond to each of the situations more safely. Record their ideas in the last column, e.g. telling yourself that it's better to be late than sorry.
- Allow time for pupils to complete the grid.
- Bring the class back together and share some of their suggestions.
- Emphasise successful strategies for managing stress, e.g.
 - Good time management so that you set off on your journey with time to spare.
 - Good organisation such as checking your car before starting a journey so that you don't run out of screenwash or petrol.
 - Getting rid of tension by unclenching your teeth/breathing out with a loud sigh/letting your shoulders drop.
 - Telling yourself that it won't be the end of the world if you are late.
 - Keeping control so that you don't react to aggressive drivers with more aggression. Tell yourself that they're not worth it
- Emphasise the inappropriateness of screen based car chase behaviour on real roads and that only highly trained and skilled drivers can safely undertake high-speed manoeuvres on the road. Even they can make mistakes, which cost lives. They face the same consequences that any other road user might for not driving with sufficient care or attention or for driving dangerously. Some, including police officers and other emergency drivers, have gone to prison.
- Discuss the use of stress management strategies in other forms of travel – as a pedestrian/car passenger/bus or train passenger.

Review

- Pupils should reflect on how good they are at keeping calm in stressful situations. Can they resist reacting to aggression? Do they use any of the stress management strategies discussed in the lesson?

KS4: PSHE 3

Speed, stress and driving

Discussion Sheet Incident scenarios

Situation 1

You are travelling along a narrow road way with traffic flowing in opposite directions. You are late. A cyclist is in front of you and travelling in the same direction. The road does not widen for ages. Visibility is not very good.

Situation 2

You are running a little late for an appointment at a place you've never been to before. You almost go past the motorway exit you need by mistake. You see a gap in the traffic and decide to pull off at the last moment.

Situation 3

Someone following the car you are in is very close to you and seems intent on getting past you.

Situation 4

A car pulls out of a junction in front of you and then travels very slowly.

Situation 5

Someone pulls up at a set of traffic lights alongside you. When the lights change it becomes clear that they are in the wrong lane, they accelerate sharply and try to cut in front of you.

Situation 6

You are approaching a junction and realise that you are in the wrong lane. You are in heavy traffic.

Situation 7

You have to make a long journey on muddy roads during the winter. The screen is very dirty and suddenly the screen wash stops working.

KS4: PSHE 3

Speed, stress and driving

Activity Sheet Incident reaction grid

Incident	The poor choice	The better choice	Factors that could influence the better choice
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			